



**Australian
Bureau of
Statistics**

FEBRUARY 1998

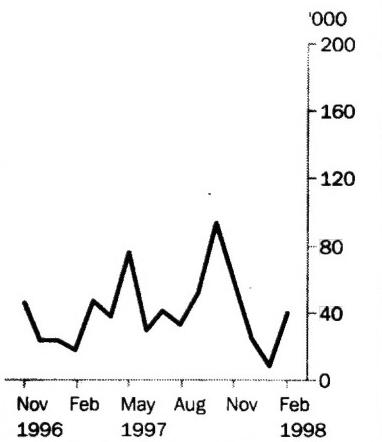
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INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES

AUSTRALIA

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Working days lost



FEBRUARY KEY FIGURES

	Jan 98	Feb 98	12 months ended Feb 98
Number of disputes	27	42	446
Number of employees ('000)	4.6	23.4	320.1
Working days lost ('000)	8.6	39.4	540.9
Working days lost per thousand employees	76

FEBRUARY KEY POINTS

MONTHLY ESTIMATES

- In February a total of 39,400 working days were lost through industrial disputation, an increase of 30,800 from January (8,600).
- The industry recording the highest level of disputation was Education; Health and community services with 14,300 working days lost, representing 36% of all working days lost in Australia.
- On a State basis, Victoria recorded the highest number of working days lost (27,400) which represented 70% of the Australian total.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES

- The number of working days lost for the 12 months ended February 1998 was 540,900, a decrease of 363,600 (40%) from the previous 12 months.
- Industries which recorded the highest level of disputation for the 12 months ended February 1998 were Coal mining with 101,700 working days lost, Education; Health and community services (100,200), and Construction (95,300).
- The Coal mining industry had the highest rate of working days lost per thousand employees with 4,244, followed by the Construction industry (252).
- On a State basis, Victoria recorded the highest rate of working days lost per thousand employees with 127, followed by Queensland (70), New South Wales (67), and Western Australia (64).
- Disputes relating to managerial policy accounted for 50% of working days lost in Australia (56% of total disputes) in the 12 months ended February 1998. Of the method directly responsible for ending each stoppage of work, 315 disputes (71%) were ended through resumption without negotiation, 14% by either State or Federal legislation or joint Federal-State legislation, and 13% by negotiation.

INQUIRIES

- For further information about these and related statistics, contact Soula Macfarlane on 03 9615 7080, or any ABS Office.

N O T E S

FORTHCOMING ISSUES

ISSUE	RELEASE DATE
March 1998	17 June 1998
April 1998	22 July 1998
May 1998	17 August 1998

CHANGES IN THIS ISSUE There are no changes in this issue.

W. McLennan
Australian Statistician

INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES WHICH OCCURRED DURING THE PERIOD, Australia

NUMBER OF DISPUTES..... EMPLOYEES INVOLVED...

Period	Commenced in period	Total	Newly involved(a)	Total	Working days lost
	no.	no.	'000	'000	'000
1995	635	643	335.4	344.3	547.6
1996	539	543	575.9	577.7	928.5
1997	444	447	315.1	315.4	534.2
1996					
December	44	49	9.3	20.8	23.0
1997					
January	29	31	6.7	7.1	23.5
February	33	37	16.4	17.4	17.9
March	33	35	33.3	34.8	47.1
April	40	42	30.9	31.3	37.7
May	42	46	49.3	57.2	76.6
June	42	55	10.5	19.5	29.7
July	42	49	25.0	26.1	40.8
August	34	43	9.6	13.1	32.5
September	42	51	20.2	31.3	51.9
October	36	41	78.1	80.0	93.5
November	44	53	28.9	54.4	58.7
December	27	39	6.4	22.6	24.3
1998					
January	24	27	4.0	4.6	8.6
February	37	42	22.7	23.4	39.4
Twelve months ended -					
February 1996	625	639	372.8	379.8	547.3
February 1997	520	529	516.0	556.9	904.5
February 1998	443	446	318.6	320.1	540.9

(a) Comprises employees involved in disputes which commenced during the month and employees newly involved in disputes which continued from the previous month.



WORKING DAYS LOST, By Industry—Australia

MINING..... MANUFACTURING.....

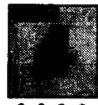
Period	MINING.....		MANUFACTURING.....		Const- ruction	'000	Transport and storage; Commun- ication services	Education; Health and community services	Other industries(a)	'000
	Coal	Other	'000	Other						
1995	111.1	78.0	54.8	105.1	42.7	38.6	70.9	46.3	547.6	
1996	160.8	4.4	58.6	44.8	334.8	20.4	239.8	64.9	928.5	
1997	95.7	1.1	76.9	68.7	107.8	47.7	94.0	42.1	534.2	
1996										
December	16.2	0.0	0.4	1.0	1.2	1.1	2.0	1.1	23.0	
1997										
January	3.3	0.0	0.2	6.1	13.7	0.0	0.0	0.1	23.5	
February	2.8	0.0	1.0	0.2	5.3	0.2	8.1	0.3	17.9	
March	2.5	0.0	2.0	0.0	3.0	5.4	33.6	0.6	47.1	
April	4.0	0.3	7.9	5.7	6.6	1.8	8.6	2.7	37.7	
May	14.0	0.6	15.8	6.4	5.8	1.9	21.9	10.3	76.6	
June	16.6	0.1	2.2	3.0	2.5	0.8	1.3	3.3	29.7	
July	13.3	0.0	1.1	1.8	9.0	5.8	3.6	6.1	40.8	
August	3.7	0.0	3.1	1.2	17.5	5.0	0.4	1.8	32.5	
September	11.8	0.0	8.2	6.2	1.3	9.8	0.1	14.4	51.9	
October	14.0	0.0	19.6	23.0	25.0	9.3	1.2	1.4	93.5	
November	5.9	0.0	10.1	10.7	13.7	2.1	15.2	1.1	58.7	
December	3.8	0.0	5.9	4.3	4.5	5.7	0.0	0.0	24.3	
1998										
January	3.2	0.0	0.3	1.8	3.0	0.3	0.0	0.1	8.6	
February	8.8	0.0	0.4	7.5	3.4	4.4	14.3	0.5	39.4	
Twelve months ended -										
February 1996	112.1	75.6	45.2	98.6	40.7	35.7	86.8	52.6	547.3	
February 1997	155.8	2.3	57.5	48.5	340.1	18.5	229.3	52.5	904.5	
February 1998	101.7	1.1	76.5	71.7	95.3	52.1	100.2	42.3	540.9	

(a) Comprises: Agriculture, forestry and fishing; Electricity, gas and water supply; Wholesale trade; Retail trade; Accommodation, cafes and restaurants; Finance and insurance; Property and business services; Government administration and defence; Cultural and recreational services; Personal and other services.



WORKING DAYS LOST

	New South Wales	Victoria	Queensland	South Australia	Western Australia	Tasmania	Northern Territory	Australian Capital Territory	Australia
Period	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
1995	113.6	126.1	182.7	15.3	101.6	3.5	3.6	1.2	547.6
1996	377.9	218.1	205.4	41.6	47.3	13.0	4.4	20.9	928.5
1997	153.7	212.1	92.0	8.0	60.1	5.7	0.5	2.1	534.2
1996 December	12.2	3.9	6.3	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.4	0.0	23.0
1997	3.2	1.1	1.7	1.9	15.5	0.0	0.1	0.0	23.5
January	3.2	10.7	1.3	0.3	2.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	17.9
February	16.3	8.1	22.5	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	47.1
March	2.6	11.2	2.3	1.1	20.2	0.0	0.0	0.3	37.7
April	13.2	16.5	33.0	1.6	9.8	1.4	0.1	1.1	76.6
May	10.8	7.4	7.4	0.2	3.7	0.0	0.0	0.3	29.7
June	18.5	10.0	7.4	0.2	0.9	3.7	0.0	0.1	40.8
July	22.1	5.4	3.8	0.0	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.1	32.5
August	23.0	18.3	7.1	1.2	1.6	0.3	0.2	0.2	51.9
September	28.0	60.1	3.6	0.7	1.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	93.5
October	8.1	46.0	0.5	0.4	3.4	0.1	0.1	0.0	58.7
November	4.8	17.3	1.3	0.4	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	24.3
1998	3.3	1.5	1.1	0.3	2.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.6
January	9.3	27.4	0.9	0.3	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.3	39.4
Twelve months ended -									
February 1996	128.5	123.7	156.9	12.8	113.7	3.7	4.4	3.6	547.3
February 1997	360.1	221.7	201.0	39.6	48.9	12.1	3.1	18.0	904.5
February 1998	160.0	229.2	91.0	6.5	45.6	5.7	0.5	2.4	540.9



WORKING DAYS LOST PER THOUSAND EMPLOYEES, By Industry: Australia—12 months ended

MINING..... MANUFACTURING.....

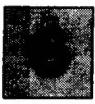
Twelve months ended			Metal product; Machinery and equipment	Other	Construction	Transport and storage; Communication services	Education; Health and community services	Other industries(a)	All industries
	Coal	Other							
1996									
December	7 171	73	146	70	892	43	187	17	131
1997									
January	7 369	71	145	80	899	42	186	16	132
February	7 095	37	142	76	905	38	179	14	128
March	6 833	26	146	74	907	38	157	12	122
April	6 568	20	165	81	921	42	126	11	117
May	6 934	30	199	87	677	42	102	13	105
June	7 245	32	203	86	405	42	91	14	90
July	6 269	32	197	82	263	49	84	9	75
August	5 150	18	111	64	248	52	73	9	63
September	5 522	18	129	54	215	70	70	13	65
October	5 332	19	165	86	247	89	71	13	73
November	4 750	19	175	102	281	91	74	11	75
December	4 206	19	189	107	290	101	73	11	75
1998									
January	3 991	20	190	101	257	102	73	11	73
February	4 244	20	189	112	252	111	78	11	76
February 1994	3 537	288	407	111	40	54	100	42	101
February 1995	5 508	361	142	135	101	124	65	15	77
February 1996	4 543	1 319	117	151	109	77	70	14	79

(a) Comprises: Agriculture, forestry and fishing; Electricity, gas and water supply; Wholesale trade; Retail trade; Accommodation, cafes and restaurants; Finance and insurance; Property and business services; Government administration and defence; Cultural and recreational services; Personal and other services.



WORKING DAYS LOST PER THOUSAND EMPLOYEES—12 months ended

Twelve months ended	New South Wales	Victoria	Queensland	South Australia	Western Australia	Tasmania	Northern Territory	Australian Capital Territory	Australia
1996									
December	158	122	162	77	68	78	59	148	131
1997									
January	158	121	161	80	72	73	60	148	132
February	150	123	158	74	70	73	41	129	128
March	132	121	172	55	69	73	37	129	122
April	108	125	171	56	95	73	35	130	117
May	86	117	162	39	95	81	13	122	105
June	70	107	133	30	94	79	13	95	90
July	58	84	117	25	93	75	10	40	75
August	59	60	94	15	82	43	9	22	63
September	64	63	93	14	82	36	12	21	65
October	73	92	80	15	81	36	11	21	73
November	67	110	75	14	84	35	12	15	75
December	64	118	71	15	85	35	7	15	75
1998									
January	64	118	70	12	66	35	6	15	73
February	67	127	70	12	64	35	6	17	76
February 1994	90	152	116	46	51	29	34	79	101
February 1995	88	57	131	46	44	31	106	6	77
February 1996	55	70	126	24	168	23	60	26	79



INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES, Australia—12 months ended February 1998(a)

	<i>Number of disputes</i>	<i>Employees involved</i>	<i>Working days lost</i>
	<i>no.</i>	<i>'000</i>	<i>'000</i>

CAUSE OF DISPUTE

Wages	48	22.3	90.4
Leave, pensions, compensation	14	2.6	4.9
Managerial policy	247	171.3	265.6
Physical working conditions	56	9.8	12.3
Trade unionism	47	6.8	6.6
Hours of work	8	3.7	4.0
Other	21	103.7	148.0
Total	441	320.2	531.7

DURATION OF DISPUTE

Up to and including 1 day	279	175.2	134.7
Over 1 and up to and including 2 days	77	115.8	176.7
Over 2 and less than 5 days	48	13.1	44.7
5 and less than 10 days	24	11.9	84.0
10 and less than 20 days	9	2.8	45.7
20 days and over	4	1.4	46.0
Total	441	320.2	531.7

METHOD OF SETTLEMENT

Negotiation	59	14.3	54.1
State legislation	25	8.1	31.3
Federal and joint Federal-State legislation	38	21.4	96.2
Resumption without negotiation	315	276.2	348.7
Other methods	4	0.3	1.4
Total	441	320.2	531.7

(a) Includes only industrial disputes which ended during the year, but may have commenced outside the reference period.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1 The statistics in this publication relate to disputes which involved stoppages of work of ten working days or more at the establishments where the stoppages occurred. Ten working days is equivalent to the amount of ordinary time worked by ten people in one day, regardless of the length of the stoppage, for example, 3,000 workers on strike for 2 hours would be counted as 750 working days lost (assuming they work an 8 hour day).

2 The statistics of working days lost relate to the losses due to industrial disputes only (see the definition of 'Disputes' in the Glossary). Effects on other establishments, such as stand-downs because of lack of materials, disruption of transport services, power cuts, etc. are not included.

3 The statistics of industrial disputes are compiled mainly from data obtained from employers (both private and public sector), from trade unions and from reports of government authorities. Particulars of some stoppages, e.g. State or Australia wide general strikes may have been estimated and the statistics therefore should be regarded as giving only a broad measure of the extent of industrial disputes as defined above.

TYPE OF DISPUTE

4 Included in these statistics are the following types of industrial disputes:

- unauthorised stopwork meetings;
- unofficial strikes;
- sympathetic strikes (e.g. strikes in support of a group of workers already on strike);
- political or protest strikes;
- general strikes;
- work stoppages initiated by employers (e.g. lockouts); and
- rotating or revolving strikes (i.e. strikes which occur when workers at different locations take turns to stop work).

Excluded from these statistics are work-to-rules, go-slows, bans (e.g. overtime bans) and sit-ins. In addition, industrial disputes in which employees resign are deemed to have been resolved. Statistics on those disputes will cease to be collected from the date of the employees' resignations.

CHANGE IN METHODOLOGY

5 The basis for the calculation of working days lost per thousand employees was changed in the January 1995 edition of this publication to use estimates of employees taken from the ABS Labour Force Survey only. Estimates have been recalculated on this basis for each 12 monthly period back to December 1990 and are available on request. For the January 1987 to December 1994 editions of this publication, estimates of employees were taken predominantly from the ABS Survey of Employment and Earnings (*Employed Wage and Salary Earners* (6248.0)).

6 The basis for the calculation of the number of disputes was changed in the November 1992 publication and the series revised back to September 1991. Prior to September 1991, disputes affecting more than one industry and/or State were counted as a separate dispute in each industry and State and in the Australian total. From September 1991 onwards, a dispute affecting more than one industry and/or State is counted once in each industry and/or State, but only once at the broader industry and Australia level. The reason for the change was to align the method of counting the number of industrial disputes with the International Labour Organisation guidelines. This change does not affect the estimates of employees involved or working days lost.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

- INDUSTRY CLASSIFICATION **7** Industry information on a monthly basis from January 1994 and on an annual basis from December 1994 is classified according to the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC) — for more details refer to *Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification*, 1993, (1292.0). It replaces the Australian Standard Industrial Classification (ASIC) which had been in use for many years. Data for periods prior to January 1994 for monthly data and December 1994 for annual data have been classified only according to ASIC.
- RELIABILITY OF ESTIMATES **8** Inaccuracies may occur because of imperfections in information provided by respondents or in processing by the ABS. Although considerable care is taken in questionnaire design; in the instructions given to respondents; and in editing the returns; these inaccuracies may occur in any enumeration, whether it be a full count or a sample.
- RELATED PUBLICATIONS **9** Users may also wish to refer to the following publications and standard data services which are available from ABS Bookshops:
- *Industrial Disputes, Australia*, 1996 (6322.0) — issued annually
 - *Labour Statistics, Australia*, 1997 (6101.0) — issued annually
 - *Labour Force, Australia* (6203.0) — issued monthly
 - *Trade Union Statistics, Australia*, 1996 (6323.0) — discontinued
 - *Trade Union Members, Australia*, August 1996 (6325.0) — issued biennially
 - *Weekly Earnings of Employees (Distribution), Australia*, August 1997 (6310.0) — annual
 - *Working Arrangements, Australia*, August 1997 (6342.0) — biennially
 - *Employment Benefits, Australia*, August 1994 (6334.0.40.001) — standard data service — issued irregularly
- 10** Current publications and other products produced by the ABS are listed in the *Catalogue of Publications and Products, Australia* (1101.0). The ABS also issues, on Tuesdays and Fridays, a *Release Advice* (1105.0) which lists products to be released in the next few days. The Catalogue and Release Advice are available from any ABS office, are available by subscription and can also be accessed through the ABS Internet Homepage (<http://www.abs.gov.au>).
- UNPUBLISHED STATISTICS **11** A range of unpublished data is also available on request including dispute details at more detailed industry levels, cross-classified by State/Territory, and finer cause of dispute and method of settlement categories than those published. Considerable time series exist for most variables. Inquiries regarding data availability and the associated charges should be directed to Soula Macfarlane on 03 9615 7080.
- ROUNDING **12** Where estimates have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.
- SYMBOLS AND OTHER USAGES .. not applicable
n.p. not available for publication but included in totals where applicable, unless otherwise indicated.

GLOSSARY

- Cause of dispute** The statistics for cause of industrial disputes relate to the reported main cause of stoppage of work and not necessarily all causes that may have been responsible for the stoppage of work. For these reasons, the statistics do not reflect the relative importance of all causes of disputes as perceived by both employers and employees. The causes are classified from information supplied by employers and according to standards determined by the International Labour Organisation. The classification of causes is as follows:
- Wages.* Claims involving general principles relating to wages e.g. increase (decrease) in wages; variation in method of payment or combined claims relating to wages, hours or conditions of work in which the claim about wages is deemed to be the most important. Combined claims in which the other claims are deemed to be the most important are included under the relevant clause. Disputes over award restructuring are included under managerial policy.
- Leave, pensions, compensation.* Claims involving general principles relating to holidays and leave provisions; pension and retirement provisions; workers' compensation provisions; insertion of penal clause provisions in awards.
- Managerial policy.* Disputes concerning the exercise of managerial control by employers, e.g. terms and conditions of employment (other than disputes specifically about wages and hours); new awards and agreements; award restructuring; work practices; principles of promotion or deployment of staff including roster complaints and retrenchments; disciplinary matters including alleged victimisation of union officials; employment of particular persons; disagreement with managerial decisions.
- Physical working conditions.* Disputes concerning physical working conditions and safety issues, e.g. protective clothing and equipment; first aid services; uncomfortable working conditions; lack of, or the condition of, amenities; claims for assistance; shortage or poor distribution of equipment or material; condition of equipment; new production methods and equipment; arduous physical tasks.
- Trade unionism.* Disputes concerning employment of non-unionists, inter-union and intra-union disputes; sympathy stoppages in support of employees in another industry; recognition of union activities.
- Hours of work.* Claims involving general principles relating to hours of work, e.g. decrease (increase) in hours, distribution of hours.
- Other.* Disputes concerning protests directed against persons or situations other than those relating to the employer/employee relationship, e.g. political matters; fining and jailing of persons; lack of work; lack of adequate transport; non-award public holidays; accidents and attendance at funerals. Stoppages for which no reason is given are also included in this category.

G L O S S A R Y

Disputes	<p>For these statistics, an <i>industrial dispute</i> is defined as a withdrawal from work by a group of employees, or a refusal by an employer or a number of employers to permit some or all of their employees to work, each withdrawal or refusal being made in order to enforce a demand, to resist a demand, or to express a grievance.</p> <p>A dispute affecting several establishments is counted as a single dispute if it is organised or directed by one person or organisation; otherwise it is counted as a separate dispute at each establishment (in each State or Territory) and in each industry in which it occurred.</p> <p>A dispute affecting more than one industry and/or State is counted once in each industry and State but only once at the broader industry and Australia level. Prior to September 1991 disputes covering more than one industry and/or State were counted differently (refer to paragraph 6 of the Explanatory Notes for details).</p> <p>When there is a return to work between stoppages over the same issue, and the return to work is for less than two complete months, the stoppages are counted as a single dispute. When the return to work is for two or more months, the dispute is considered to have ended at the time of the return to work. Should a subsequent stoppage occur, it is counted as a new dispute.</p>
Disputes which occurred during the period	<p><i>Disputes which occurred during the period</i> encompasses those disputes which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ started in a previous month or year and ended in the reference period, or▪ began and ended in the reference period, or▪ began in the reference period and continued into the next period, or▪ started prior to the reference month or year, continued through the reference period and into the next period.
Duration of dispute	<p>The <i>duration</i> of a dispute is the average number of working days lost per employee involved in the dispute. The duration of the dispute is calculated by dividing the number of working days lost in the dispute by the number of employees involved (both directly and indirectly).</p>
Employees	<p><i>Employees</i> refers to wage and salary earners only. Excluded are persons who are self-employed (e.g. building sub-contractors, owner-drivers of trucks) and employers.</p> <p><i>Employees directly involved</i> are those who actually participated in the dispute in order to enforce or resist a demand or to express a grievance.</p> <p><i>Employees indirectly involved</i> are those who ceased work at the establishment where the stoppages occurred, but who are not themselves parties to the dispute. Employees who ceased work at establishments other than those where the stoppages occurred are excluded (see paragraph 2 of the Explanatory Notes).</p>

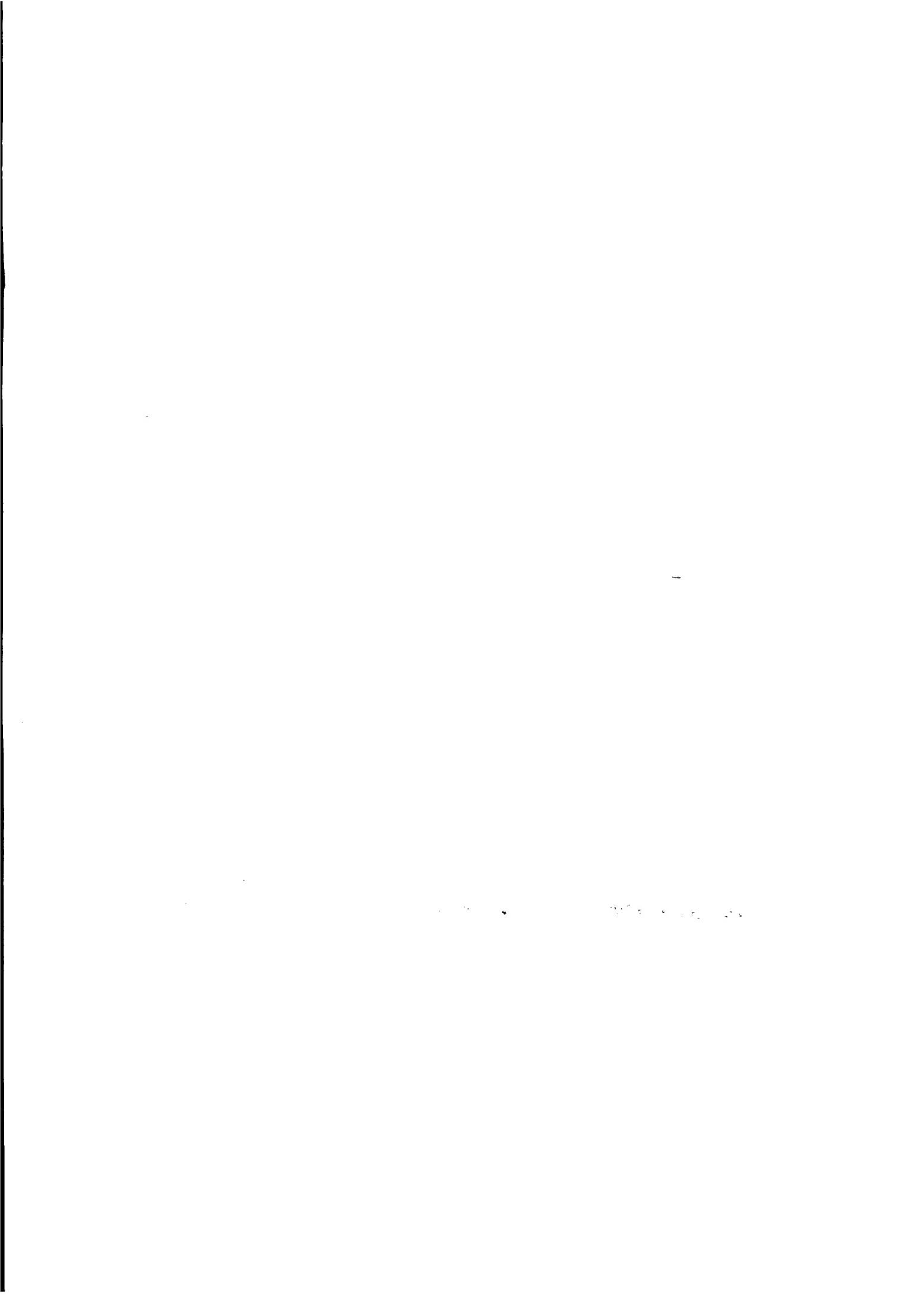
G L O S S A R Y

Employees continued	<p><i>Total employees involved</i> for any period of time are obtained by adding together the number of employees involved in each dispute in the period. For any period of time the figures may include details of the same employees involved in more than one dispute. The longer the period of reference, the more chance there is of some double counting in the number of employees involved. Where there are varying numbers of employees involved during the progress of a dispute, the figures of employees involved relate to the largest number of individual employees involved on any one day. Generally, the <i>total</i> number of employees involved for each year will equal the sum of the total number of employees involved in the first month of a year plus the number of employees <i>newly</i> involved in subsequent months. Differences between monthly and annual totals can occur due to the temporary cessation of stoppages which resume in subsequent months. Employees re-involved in this type of dispute are not classified as employees <i>newly</i> involved in stoppages in the second period in which the dispute occurs.</p>
Method of Settlement	<p>Statistics of the <i>method of settlement</i> of industrial disputes relate to the method directly responsible for ending the stoppage of work as reported and not necessarily to the method (or methods) responsible for settling all matters in dispute. For these reasons, they do not reflect the relative importance of the work of various industrial tribunals operating under State and Federal legislation. The classification of method of settlement is as follows:</p> <p><i>Negotiation.</i> Private negotiation between the parties involved, or their representatives, without the intervention or assistance of authorities constituted under State or Federal industrial legislation.</p> <p><i>State legislation.</i> Intervention or assistance of an industrial authority or authorities created by or constituted under State conciliation and arbitration or wages board legislation, or reference to such authorities or compulsory or voluntary conference. Intervention, assistance or advice of State government officials or inspectors.</p> <p><i>Federal and joint Federal-State legislation.</i> Compulsory or voluntary conference or by intervention or assistance of, or reference to, the industrial relations commissions created by or constituted under the Industrial Relations Act, Coal Industry Acts, Stevedoring Industry Act, and other acts such as the Navigation Act; Public Service Arbitration Act. Intervention, assistance or advice of Federal government officials or inspectors.</p> <p><i>Resumption without negotiation.</i> This category may include some disputes which are settled subject to subsequent negotiation of a formal nature, such as industrial court hearings. Stop-work meetings are included, and this category may also include disputes settled by 'resumption' as stated, but about which no further information is available.</p> <p><i>Other methods.</i> Mediation; filling places of employees on strike or locked out; closing establishments permanently; dismissal or resignation of employees.</p>
Working days lost	<p>Working days lost refers to working days lost by employees directly and indirectly involved in the dispute and figures are generally as reported by parties to the dispute. For some disputes working days lost are estimated on the basis of the number of employees involved and the duration of the dispute.</p>

G L O S S A R Y

Working days lost per thousand employees

Working days lost per thousand employees are calculated for the 12 month period from working days lost and estimates of employees obtained from the ABS Labour Force Survey. Refer to paragraph 5 of the Explanatory Notes for details of the way in which these measures are calculated, and the change in the method of calculation from the January 1995 edition of this publication.





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